Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundara

Issue #11

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ŚB 12.13.16

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वैष्णवानां यथा शम्भुः पुराणानामिदम्तथा ॥ १२.१३.१६ ॥

nimna-gānāṁ yathā gaṅgā

devānām acyuto yathā

vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ

purāṇānām idam tathā

Synonyms

nimna-gānām — of rivers flowing down to the sea; yathā — as; gaṅgā — the Ganges; devānām — of all deities; acyutaḥ — the infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead; yathā — as; vaiṣṇavānām — of devotees of Lord Viṣṇu; yathā — as; śambhuḥ — Śiva; purāṇānām — of Purāṇas; idam — this; tathā — similarly.

Translation

Just as the Gaṅgā is the greatest of all rivers, Lord Acyuta the supreme among deities and Lord Śambhu [Śiva] the greatest of Vaiṣṇavas, so Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the greatest of all Purāṇas.

Vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ: the most exalted Vaiṣṇava is Lord Śiva, and those who are actually devotees of Lord Śiva follow Lord Śiva's advice and take shelter at the lotus feet of Lord Viṣṇu.

ŚB 4.30.38

वयं तु साक्षाद्भगवन्भवस्य प्रियस्य सख्युः क्षणसङ्गमेन
सुदुश्चिकित्स्यस्य भवस्य मृत्योर्भिषक्तमं त्वाद्य गतिं गताः स्म ॥ ४.३०.३८ ॥

vayaṁ tu sākṣād bhagavan bhavasya

priyasya sakhyuḥ kṣaṇa-saṅgamena

suduścikitsyasya bhavasya mṛtyor

bhiṣaktamaṁ tvādya gatiṁ gatāḥ sma

Synonyms

vayam — we; tu — then; sākṣāt — directly; bhagavan — O Lord; bhavasya — of Lord Śiva; priyasya — very dear; sakhyuḥ — Your friend; kṣaṇa — for a moment; saṅgamena — by association; suduścikitsyasya — very difficult to cure; bhavasya — of material existence; mṛtyoḥ — of death; bhiṣak-tamam — the most expert physician; tvā — You; adya — today; gatim — destination; gatāḥ — have achieved; sma — certainly.

Translation

Dear Lord, by virtue of a moment's association with Lord Śiva, who is very dear to You and who is Your most intimate friend, we

were fortunate to attain You. You are the most expert physician, capable of treating the incurable disease of material existence. On account of our great fortune, we have been able to take shelter at Your lotus feet.

Purport

It has been said, hariṁ vinā na mṛtiṁ taranti. without taking shelter of the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, one cannot attain relief from the clutches of māyā, the repetition of birth, old age, disease and death. The Pracetās received the shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead by the grace of Lord Śiva. Lord Śiva is the supreme devotee of Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ: the most exalted Vaiṣṇava is Lord Śiva, and those who are actually devotees of Lord Śiva follow Lord Śiva's advice and take shelter at the lotus feet of Lord Viṣṇu. The so-called devotees of Lord Śiva, who are simply after material prosperity, are in a way deceived by Lord Śiva. He does not actually deceive them, because Lord Śiva has no business deceiving people, but because the so-called devotees of Lord Śiva want to be deceived, Lord Śiva, who is very easily pleased, allows them all kinds of material benedictions. These benedictions might ironically result in the destruction of the so-called devotees. For instance, Rāvaṇa took all material benediction from Lord Śiva, but the result was that he was ultimately destroyed with his family, kingdom and everything else because he misused Lord Śiva's benediction. Because of his material power, he became very proud and puffed up so that he dared kidnap the wife of Lord Rāmacandra. In this way he was ruined. To get material benedictions from Lord Śiva is not difficult, but actually these are not benedictions. The Pracetās received benediction from Lord Śiva, and as a result they attained the shelter of the lotus feet of

Lord Viṣṇu. This is real benediction. The gopīs also worshiped Lord Śiva in Vṛndāvana, and the lord is still staying there as Gopīśvara. The gopīs, however, prayed that Lord Śiva bless them by giving them Lord Kṛṣṇa as their husband. There is no harm in worshiping the demigods, provided that one's aim is to return home, back to Godhead. Generally people go to the demigods for material benefit, as indicated in Bhagavad-gītā (7.20):

kāmais tais tair hṛta-jñānāḥ

prapadyante 'nya-devatāḥ

taṁ taṁ niyamam āsthāya

prakṛtyā niyatāḥ svayā

"Those whose minds are distorted by material desires surrender unto demigods and follow the particular rules and regulations of worship according to their own natures." One enamored by material benefits is called hṛta-jñāna, "one who has lost his intelligence." In this connection it is to be noted that sometimes in revealed scriptures Lord Śiva is described as being nondifferent from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The point is that Lord Śiva and Lord Viṣṇu are so intimately connected that there is no difference in opinion. The actual fact is, ekale īśvara kṛṣṇa, āra saba bhṛtya: "The only supreme master is Kṛṣṇa, and all others are His devotees or servants." (Cc. Ādi 5.142) This is the real fact, and there is no difference of opinion between Lord Śiva and Lord Viṣṇu in this connection. Nowhere in revealed scripture does Lord Śiva claim to be equal to Lord Viṣṇu. This is simply the creation of the so-called devotees of Lord Śiva, who claim that Lord Śiva and Lord Viṣṇu are one. This is strictly forbidden in the vaiṣṇava-tantra: yas tu nārāyaṇaṁ devam. Lord Viṣṇu, Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā are intimately connected as master and servants. Śiva-viriñci-

nutam: Viṣṇu is honored and offered obeisances by Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā. To consider that they are all equal is a great offense. They are all equal in the sense that Lord Viṣṇu is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and all others are His eternal servants.

vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ: Lord Śiva is the best of all devotees.

ŚB 4.24.30

अथ भागवता यूयं प्रियाः स्थ भगवान्यथा

न मद्भागवतानां च प्रेयानन्योऽस्ति कर्हिचित् ॥ ४.२४.३० ॥

atha bhāgavatā yūyaṁ

priyāḥ stha bhagavān yathā

na mad bhāgavatānāṁ ca

preyān anyo ’sti karhicit

Synonyms

atha — therefore; bhāgavatāḥ — devotees; yūyam — all of you; priyāḥ — very dear to me; stha — you are; bhagavān — the Supreme Personality of Godhead; yathā — as; na — neither; mat — than me; bhāgavatānām — of the devotees; ca — also; preyān — very dear; anyaḥ — others; asti — there is; karhicit — at any time.

Translation

You are all devotees of the Lord, and as such I appreciate that you are as respectable as the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Himself. I know in this way that the devotees also respect me and that I am dear to them. Thus no one can be as dear to the devotees as I am.

Purport

It is said, vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ: Lord Śiva is the best of all devotees. Therefore all devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa are also devotees of Lord Śiva. In Vṛndāvana there is Lord Śiva's temple called Gopīśvara. The gopīs used to worship not only Lord Śiva but Kātyāyanī, or Durgā, as well, but their aim was to attain the favor of Lord Kṛṣṇa. A devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa does not disrespect Lord Śiva, but worships Lord Śiva as the most exalted devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Consequently whenever a devotee worships Lord Śiva, he prays to Lord Śiva to achieve the favor of Kṛṣṇa, and he does not request material profit. In Bhagavad-gītā (7.20) it is said that generally people worship demigods for some material profit (kāmais tais tair hṛta-jñānāḥ prapadyante 'nya-devatāḥ). Driven by material lust, they worship demigods. But a devotee never does so, for he is never driven by material lust. That is the difference between a devotee's respect for Lord Śiva and an asura's respect for him. The asura worships Lord Śiva, takes some benediction from him, misuses the benediction, and ultimately is killed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who awards him liberation.

Because Lord Śiva is a great devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he loves all the devotees of the Supreme Lord. Lord Śiva told the Pracetās that because they were devotees of the Lord, he loved them very much. Lord Śiva was not kind and merciful only to the Pracetās; anyone who is a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very dear to Lord Śiva. Not only are the devotees dear to Lord Śiva, but he respects them as much as he respects the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Similarly, devotees

of the Supreme Lord also worship Lord Śiva as the most dear devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. They do not worship him as a separate Personality of Godhead. It is stated in the list of nāma-aparādhas that it is an offense to think that the chanting of the name of Hari and the chanting of Hara, or Śiva, are the same. The devotees must always know that Lord Viṣṇu is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and that Lord Śiva is His devotee. A devotee should be offered respect on the level of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and sometimes even more respect. Indeed, Lord Rāma, the Personality of Godhead Himself, sometimes worshiped Lord Śiva. If a devotee is worshiped by the Lord, why should a devotee not be worshiped by other devotees on the same level with the Lord? This is the conclusion. From this verse it appears that Lord Śiva blesses the asuras simply for the sake of formality. Actually he loves one who is devoted to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Lord Gopīśvara the Śiva deity in Vṛndāvana forest

ŚB 10.30.9

चूतप्रियालपनसासनकोविदार जम्ब्वर्कबिल्वबकुलाम्रकदम्बनीपाः

येऽन्ये परार्थभवका यमुनोपकूलाः शंसन्तु कृष्णपदवीं रहितात्मनां नः ॥ १०.३०.९ ॥

cūta-priyāla-panasāsana-kovidāra

jambv-arka-bilva-bakulāmra-kadamba-nīpāḥ

ye 'nye parārtha-bhavakā yamunopakūlāḥ

śaṁsantu kṛṣṇa-padavīṁ rahitātmanāṁ naḥ

Synonyms

cūta — O mango creeper; priyāla — O priyāla tree (a kind of śāla tree); panasa — O jackfruit tree; āsana — O āsana tree (a yellow śāla); kovidāra — O kovidāra tree; jambu — O rose-apple tree; arka — O arka plant; bilva — O bel-fruit tree; bakula — O mimosa tree; āmra — O mango tree; kadamba — O kadamba tree; nīpāḥ — O nīpa (a smaller kind of kadamba); ye — who; anye — others; para — of others; artha — for the sake; bhavakāḥ — whose existence; yamunā-upakūlāḥ — living near the bank of the river Yamunā; śaṁsantu — kindly tell; kṛṣṇa-padavīm — the path Kṛṣṇa has taken; rahita — who have been deprived; ātmanām — of our minds; naḥ — to us.

Translation

O cūta, O priyāla, O panasa, āsana and kovidāra, O jambu, O arka, O bilva, bakula and āmra, O kadamba and nīpa and all you other plants and trees living by the banks of the Yamunā who have dedicated your very existence to the welfare of others, we gopīs have lost our minds, so please tell us where Kṛṣṇa has gone.

Purport

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the cūta is a mango creeper, whereas the āmra is a mango tree. He goes on to explain that the nīpa, though not a very prominent tree, bears large flowers, and that the gopīs' desperation to find Kṛṣṇa is clearly shown by the fact that they approached the insignificant arka plant.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī gives the following information about Vṛndāvana's trees: "The nīpa is 'the dust kadamba,' and it has large flowers. The kadamba proper has smaller flowers and a very pleasant fragrance. The kovidāra is a particular kind of kañcanāra [mountain ebony tree]. Even though the arka plant is very insignificant, it always grows near Lord Gopīśvara[the Śiva deity in Vṛndāvana forest] because it is dear to him."

ŚB 4.24.18

आत्मारामोऽपि यस्त्वस्य लोककल्पस्य राधसे

शक्त्या युक्तो विचरति घोरया भगवान्भवः ॥ ४.२४.१८ ॥

ātmārāmo 'pi yas tv asya

loka-kalpasya rādhase

śaktyā yukto vicarati

ghorayā bhagavān bhavaḥ

Synonyms

ātma-ārāmaḥ — self-satisfied; api — although he is; yaḥ — one who is; tu — but; asya — this; loka — material world; kalpasya — when manifested; rādhase — for the matter of helping its existence; śaktyā — potencies; yuktaḥ — being engaged; vicarati — he acts; ghorayā — very dangerous; bhagavān — His Lordship; bhavaḥ — Śiva.

Translation

Lord Śiva, the most powerful demigod, second only to Lord

Viṣṇu, is self-sufficient. Although he has nothing to aspire for in the material world, for the benefit of those in the material world he is always busily engaged everywhere and is accompanied by his dangerous energies like the goddess Kālī and the goddess Durgā.

Purport

Lord Śiva is known as the greatest devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is known as the best of all types of Vaiṣṇavas (vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ). Consequently, Lord Śiva has a Vaiṣṇava sampradāya, the disciplic succession known as the Rudra sampradāya. Just as there is a Brahma sampradāya coming directly from Lord Brahmā, the Rudra sampradāya comes directly from Lord Śiva. Lord Śiva is one of the twelve great personalities, as stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.3.20):

svayambhūr nāradaḥ śambhuḥ

kumāraḥ kapilo manuḥ

prahlādo janako bhīṣmo

balir vaiyāsakir vayam

These are twelve great authorities in preaching God consciousness. The name Śambhu means Lord Śiva. His disciplic succession is also known as the Viṣṇusvāmi sampradāya, and the current Viṣṇusvāmi sampradāya is also known as the Vallabha sampradāya. The current Brahma sampradāya is known as the Madhva-Gauḍīya sampradāya. Even though Lord Śiva appeared to preach Māyāvāda philosophy, at the end of his pastimes in the form of Śaṅkarācārya he preached the Vaiṣṇava philosophy: bhaja govindaṁ bhaja govindaṁ bhaja govindaṁ mūḍha-mate. He stressed worshiping Lord Kṛṣṇa, or Govinda, three times in this verse and especially

warned his followers that they could not possibly achieve deliverance, or mukti, simply by word jugglery and grammatical puzzles. If one is actually serious to attain mukti, he must worship Lord Kṛṣṇa. That is Śrīpāda Śaṅkarācārya's last instruction.

Herein it is mentioned that Lord Śiva is always accompanied by his material energy (śaktyā ghorayā). Material energy — goddess Durgā, or goddess Kālī — is always under his control. Goddess Kālī and Durgā serve him by killing all the asuras, or demons. Sometimes Kālī becomes so infuriated that she indiscriminately kills all kinds of asuras. There is a popular picture of goddess Kālī in which she wears a garland composed of the heads of the asuras and holds in her left hand a captured head and in her right hand a great khaḍga, or chopper, for killing asuras. Great wars are symbolic representations of Kālī's devastation of the asuras and are actually conducted by the goddess Kālī:

sṛṣṭi-sthiti-pralaya-sādhana-śaktir ekā

(Brahma-saṁhitā 5.44)

Asuras try to pacify the goddess Kālī, or Durgā, by worshiping her in material opulence, but when the asuras become too intolerable, the goddess Kālī does not discriminate in killing them wholesale. Asuras do not know the secret of the energy of Lord Śiva, and they prefer to worship the goddess Kālī or Durgā or Lord Śiva for material benefit. Due to their demoniac character, they are reluctant to surrender to Lord Kṛṣṇa, as indicated by Bhagavad-gītā (7.15):

na māṁ duṣkṛtino mūḍhāḥ

prapadyante narādhamāḥ

māyayāpahṛta-jñānā

āsuraṁ bhāvam āśritāḥ

Lord Śiva's duty is very dangerous because he has to employ the energy of the goddess Kālī, or Durgā. In another popular picture the goddess Kālī is sometimes seen standing on the prostrate body of Lord Śiva, which indicates that sometimes Lord Śiva has to fall down flat in order to stop the goddess Kālī from killing the asuras. Since Lord Śiva controls the great material energy (the goddess Durgā), worshipers of Lord Śiva attain very opulent positions within this material world. Under Lord Śiva's direction, a worshiper of Lord Śiva gets all kinds of material facilities. In contrast, a Vaiṣṇava, or worshiper of Lord Viṣṇu, gradually becomes poorer in material possessions because Lord Viṣṇu does not trick His devotees into becoming materially entangled by possessions. Lord Viṣṇu gives His devotees intelligence from within, as stated in Bhagavad-gītā (10.10):

teṣāṁ satata-yuktānāṁ

bhajatāṁ prīti-pūrvakam

dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ

yena mām upayānti te

"To those who are constantly devoted and worship Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me."

Thus Lord Viṣṇu gives intelligence to His devotee so that the devotee can make progress on the path back home, back to Godhead. Since a devotee has nothing to do with any kind of material possession, he does not come under the control of the goddess Kālī, or the goddess Durgā.

Lord Śiva is also in charge of the tamo-guṇa, or the mode of

ignorance in this material world. His potency, the goddess Durgā, is described as keeping all living entities in the darkness of ignorance (yā devī sarva-bhūteṣu nidra-rūpaṁ saṁsthitā). Both Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva are incarnations of Lord Viṣṇu, but Lord Brahmā is in charge of the creation whereas Lord Śiva is in charge of the destruction, which he carries out with the help of his material energy, goddess Kālī, or goddess Durgā. Thus in this verse Lord Śiva is described as being accompanied by dangerous potencies (śaktyā ghorayā), and that is the actual position of Lord Śiva.

ŚB 8.7.33

ये त्वात्मरामगुरुभिर्हृदि चिन्तिताङ्घ्रि

द्वन्द्वं चरन्तमुमया तपसाभितप्तम् ।

कत्थन्त उग्रपरुषं निरतं श्मशाने

ते नूनमूतिमविदंस्तव हातलज्जाः ॥ ८.७.३३ ॥

ye tv ātma-rāma-gurubhir hṛdi cintitāṅghri-

dvandvaṁ carantam umayā tapasābhitaptam

katthanta ugra-paruṣaṁ nirataṁ śmaśāne

te nūnam ūtim avidaṁs tava hāta-lajjāḥ

Synonyms

ye — persons who; tu — indeed; ātma-rāma-gurubhiḥ — by those who are self-satisfied and who are considered to be spiritual

masters of the world; hṛdi — within the heart; cintita-aṅghri-dvandvam — thinking of your two lotus feet; carantam— moving; umayā — with your consort, Umā; tapasā abhitaptam — highly advanced through practice of austerity and penance; katthante — criticize your acts; ugra-paruṣam — not a gentle person; niratam — always; śmaśāne — in the crematorium; te — such persons; nūnam — indeed; ūtim — such activities; avidan — not knowing; tava — your activities; hāta-lajjāḥ — shameless.

Translation

Exalted, self-satisfied persons who preach to the entire world think of your lotus feet constantly within their hearts. However, when persons who do not know your austerity see you moving with Umā, they misunderstand you to be lusty, or when they see you wandering in the crematorium they mistakenly think that you are ferocious and envious. Certainly they are shameless. They cannot understand your activities.

Purport

Lord Śiva is the topmost Vaiṣṇava (vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ). It is therefore said, vaiṣṇavera kriyā-mudrā vijñe nā bujhaya. Even the most intelligent person cannot understand what a Vaiṣṇava like Lord Śiva is doing or how he is acting. Those who are conquered by lusty desires and anger cannot estimate the glories of Lord Śiva, whose position is always transcendental. In all the activities associated with lusty desires, Lord Śiva is an implement of ātma-rāma. Ordinary persons, therefore, should not try to understand Lord Śiva and his activities. One who tries to criticize the activities of Lord Śiva is shameless.

ŚB 7.10.65-66

अथासौ शक्तिभिः स्वाभिः शम्भोः प्राधानिकं व्यधात्
धर्मज्ञानविरक्त्यृद्धि तपोविद्याक्रियादिभिः ॥ ७.१०.६५ ॥
रथं सूतं ध्वजं वाहान्धनुर्वर्मशरादि यत्
सन्नद्धो रथमास्थाय शरं धनुरुपाददे ॥ ७.१०.६६ ॥

athāsau śaktibhiḥ svābhiḥ
śambhoḥ prādhānikaṁ vyadhāt
dharma-jñāna-virakty-ṛddhi-
tapo-vidyā-kriyādibhiḥ
rathaṁ sūtaṁ dhvajaṁ vāhān
dhanur varma-śarādi yat
sannaddho ratham āsthāya
śaraṁ dhanur upādade

Synonyms

atha — thereafter; asau — He (Lord Kṛṣṇa); śaktibhiḥ — by His potencies; svābhiḥ — personal; śambhoḥ — of Lord Śiva; prādhānikam — ingredients; vyadhāt — created; dharma — religion; jñāna — knowledge; virakti — renunciation; ṛddhi — opulence; tapaḥ — austerity; vidyā — education; kriyā — activities; ādibhiḥ — by all these and other transcendental opulences; ratham — chariot; sūtam — charioteer; dhvajam — flag; vāhān — horses and elephants; dhanuḥ — bow; varma — shield; śara-ādi — arrows and so on; yat — everything that was required; sannaddhaḥ — equipped; ratham — on the chariot;

āsthāya — seated; śaram — arrow; dhanuḥ — unto the bow; upādade — joined.

Translation

Nārada Muni continued: Thereafter, Lord Kṛṣṇa, by His own personal potency, consisting of religion, knowledge, renunciation, opulence, austerity, education and activities, equipped Lord Śiva with all the necessary paraphernalia, such as a chariot, a charioteer, a flag, horses, elephants, a bow, a shield and arrows. When Lord Śiva was fully equipped in this way, he sat down on the chariot with his arrows and bow to fight with the demons.

Purport

As stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (12.13.16): vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ: Lord Śiva is the best of the Vaiṣṇavas, the devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Indeed, he is one of the mahājanas, the twelve authorities on Vaiṣṇava philosophy (svayambhūr nāradaḥ śambhuḥ kumāraḥ kapilo manuḥ, etc.). Lord Kṛṣṇa is always prepared to help all the mahājanas and devotees in every respect (kaunteya pratijānīhi na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati). Although Lord Śiva is very powerful, he lost a battle to the asuras, and therefore he was morose and disappointed. However, because he is one of the chief devotees of the Lord, the Lord personally equipped him with all the paraphernalia for war. The devotee, therefore, must serve the Lord sincerely, and Kṛṣṇa is always in the background to protect him and, if need be, to equip him fully to fight with his enemy. For devotees there is no scarcity of knowledge or material requisites for spreading the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

ŚB 4.6.35

विद्यातपोयोगपथमास्थितं तमधीश्वरम्

चरन्तं विश्वसुहृदं वात्सल्याल्लोकमङ्गलम् ॥ ४.६.३५ ॥

vidyā-tapo-yoga-patham

āsthitaṁ tam adhīśvaram

carantaṁ viśva-suhṛdaṁ

vātsalyāl loka-maṅgalam

Synonyms

vidyā — knowledge; tapaḥ — austerity; yoga-patham — the path of devotional service; āsthitam — situated; tam — him (Lord Śiva); adhīśvaram — the master of the senses; carantam — performing (austerity, etc.); viśva-suhṛdam — the friend of the whole world; vātsalyāt — out of full affection; loka-maṅgalam — auspicious for everyone.

Translation

The demigods saw Lord Śiva situated in his perfection as the master of the senses, knowledge, fruitive activities and the path of achieving perfection. He was the friend of the entire world, and by virtue of his full affection for everyone, he was very auspicious.

Purport

Lord Śiva is full of wisdom and tapasya, austerity. One who knows the modes of work is understood to be situated on the path of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One cannot serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead unless one has

achieved full perfectional knowledge in the ways and means of performing devotional service.

Lord Śiva is described here as adhīśvara. Īśvara means "controller," and adhīśvara means particularly "controller of the senses." Generally our materially contaminated senses are apt to engage in sense gratificatory activities, but when a person is elevated by wisdom and austerity, the senses then become purified, and they become engaged in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Lord Śiva is the emblem of such perfection, and therefore in the scriptures it is said, vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ: Lord Śiva is a Vaiṣṇava. Lord Śiva, by his actions within this material world, teaches all conditioned souls how to engage in devotional service twenty-four hours a day. Therefore he is described here as loka-maṅgala, good fortune personified for all conditioned souls.

ŚB 4.4.22

नैतेन देहेन हरे कृतागसो देहोद्भवेनालमलं कुजन्मना

व्रीडा ममाभूत्कुजनप्रसङ्गतस्तज्जन्म धिग्यो महतामवद्यकृत् ॥ ४.४.२२ ॥

naitena dehena hare kṛtāgaso

dehodbhavenālam alaṁ kujanmanā

vrīḍā mamābhūt kujana-prasaṅgatas

taj janma dhig yo mahatām avadya-kṛt

Synonyms

na — not; etena — by this; dehena — by the body; hare — to Lord Śiva; kṛta-āgasaḥ — having committed offenses; deha-udbhavena — produced from your body; alam alam — enough, enough; ku-janmanā — with a contemptible birth; vrīḍā — shame; mama — my; abhūt — was; ku-jana-prasaṅgataḥ — from a relationship with a bad person; tat janma — that birth; dhik — shameful; yaḥ — who; mahatām — of the great personalities; avadya-kṛt — an offender.

Translation

You are an offender at the lotus feet of Lord Śiva, and unfortunately I have a body produced from yours. I am very much ashamed of our bodily relationship, and I condemn myself because my body is contaminated by a relationship with a person who is an offender at the lotus feet of the greatest personality.

Purport

Lord Śiva is the greatest of all devotees of Lord Viṣṇu. It is stated, vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ. Śambhu, Lord Śiva, is the greatest of all devotees of Lord Viṣṇu. In the previous verses, Satī has described that Lord Śiva is always in a transcendental position because he is situated in pure vasudeva. Vasudeva is that state from which Kṛṣṇa, Vāsudeva, is born, so Lord Śiva is the greatest devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and Satī's behavior is exemplary because no one should tolerate blasphemy against Lord Viṣṇu or His devotee. Satī is aggrieved not for her personal association with Lord Śiva but because her body is related with that of Dakṣa, who is an offender at Lord Śiva's lotus feet. She feels herself to be condemned because of the body given by her father, Dakṣa.

ŚB 8.7.39

प्राणैः स्वैः प्राणिनः पान्ति साधवः क्षणभङ्गुरैः

बद्धवैरेषु भूतेषु मोहितेष्वात्ममायया ॥ ८.७.३९ ॥

prāṇaiḥ svaiḥ prāṇinaḥ pānti

sādhavaḥ kṣaṇa-bhaṅguraiḥ

baddha-vaireṣu bhūteṣu

mohiteṣv ātma-māyayā

Synonyms

prāṇaiḥ — by lives; svaiḥ — their own; prāṇinaḥ — other living entities; pānti — protect; sādhavaḥ — devotees; kṣaṇa-bhaṅguraiḥ — temporary; baddha-vaireṣu — unnecessarily engaged in animosity; bhūteṣu — unto living entities; mohiteṣu — bewildered; ātma-māyayā — by the external energy of the Lord.

Translation

People in general, being bewildered by the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, are always engaged in animosity toward one another. But devotees, even at the risk of their own temporary lives, try to save them.

Purport

This is the characteristic of a Vaiṣṇava. Para-duḥkha-duḥkhī: a Vaiṣṇava is always unhappy to see the conditioned souls unhappy. Otherwise, he would have no business teaching them how to become happy. In materialistic life, people must certainly engage in activities of animosity. Materialistic life is therefore compared to saṁsāra-dāvānala, a blazing forest fire that automatically takes place. Lord Śiva and his followers in the paramparā system try to

save people from this dangerous condition of materialistic life. This is the duty of devotees following the principles of Lord Śiva and belonging to the Rudra sampradāya. There are four Vaiṣṇava sampradāyas, and the Rudra sampradāya is one of them because Lord Śiva (Rudra) is the best of the Vaiṣṇavas (vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ). Indeed, as we shall see, Lord Śiva drank all the poison for the benefit of humanity.

ŚB 8.12.38

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

दिष्ट्या त्वं विबुधश्रेष्ठ स्वां निष्ठामात्मना स्थितः

यन्मे स्त्रीरूपया स्वैरं मोहितोऽप्यङ्ग मायया ॥ ८.१२.३८ ॥

śrī-bhagavān uvāca

diṣṭyā tvaṁ vibudha-śreṣṭha

svāṁ niṣṭhām ātmanā sthitaḥ

yan me strī-rūpayā svairaṁ

mohito 'py aṅga māyayā

Synonyms

śrī-bhagavān uvāca — the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; diṣṭyā — all auspiciousness; tvam — unto you; vibudha-śreṣṭha — O best of all the demigods; svām — in your own; niṣṭhām — fixed situation; ātmanā — of your own self; sthitaḥ — you are situated; yat — as; me — Mine; strī-rūpayā — appearance like a woman; svairam — sufficiently; mohitaḥ — enchanted; api — in spite of; aṅga — O Lord Śiva; māyayā — by My potency.

Translation

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O best of the demigods, although you have been amply harassed because of My potency in assuming the form of a woman, you are established in your position. Therefore, may all good fortune be upon you.

Purport

Since Lord Śiva is the best of the demigods, he is the best of all devotees (vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ). His exemplary character was therefore praised by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who gave His benediction by saying, "May all good fortune be upon you." When a devotee becomes a little proud, the Supreme Lord sometimes exhibits His supreme power to dissipate the devotee's misunderstanding. After being amply harassed by Lord Viṣṇu's potency, Lord Śiva resumed his normal, unagitated condition. This is the position of a devotee. A devotee should not be agitated under any circumstances, even in the worst reverses. As confirmed in Bhagavad-gītā (6.22), yasmin sthito na duḥkhena guruṇāpi vicālyate: because of his full faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a devotee is never agitated, even in the greatest trials. This pridelessness is possible only for the first-class devotees, of whom Lord Śambhu is one.

CC Madhya 20.311

'śiva' — māyā-śakti-saṅgī, tamo-guṇāveśa

māyātīta, guṇātīta 'viṣṇu' — parameśa

Synonyms

śiva — Lord Śiva; māyā-śakti-saṅgī — an associate of the external energy; tamaḥ-guṇa-āveśa — absorbed by the quality of

ignorance; māyā-atīta — transcendental to the external energy; guṇa-atīta — transcendental to the qualities of matter; viṣṇu— Viṣṇu; parama-īśa — the Supreme Lord.

Translation

"Lord Śiva is an associate of the external energy; therefore he is absorbed in the material quality of darkness. Lord Viṣṇu is transcendental to māyā and the qualities of māyā. Therefore He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Purport

Viṣṇu is beyond the range of the material manifestation, and He is not within the control of the material energy. He is the supreme independent Personality of Godhead. This is admitted even by Śaṅkarācārya: nārāyaṇaḥ paro 'vyaktāt (Gītā-bhāṣya).In his constitutional form, Śiva is a mahā-bhāgavata, a supreme devotee of the Lord, but because he accepts māyā'sassociation — especially the quality of ignorance — he is not free from māyā's influence. Such an intimate association is completely absent in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu. Lord Śiva accepts māyā, but in the presence of Lord Viṣṇu, māyā does not exist. Consequently Lord Śiva has to be considered a product of māyā. When Lord Śiva is free from māyā'sinfluence, he is in the position of a mahā-bhāgavata, a supreme devotee of Lord Viṣṇu. Vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ.

Room Conversation with Allen Ginsberg Conversation

Date: May 1969 ,14 Location: Colombus

"Prabhupāda: Śaṁbhu is another name of Lord Śiva, Śaṁbhu. Svayaṁbhur nāradaḥ śaṁbhuḥ [SB 6.3.20]. He is called Svayaṁbhuḥ, and Śiva is called Śaṁbhu. Vaiṣṇavānām yathā śaṁbhuḥ. Svayaṁbhur nāradaḥ śaṁbhuḥ kumārāḥ kapilo manuḥ. Kumārāḥ. There is a sampradāya from Kumāra, four Kumāras, brahmacārīs. They were sons of Brahmā. When they were born, Lord Brahmā said that "You now make..., marry and produce. We want population."

In the creation, in the beginning. So they refused. "Oh, we are not going to marry. We shall remain brahmacārī, devotee." Then Lord Brahmā was angry: "Oh, you are refusing your father's order?" So from when he was angry, his eyes became red. From that, Śiva was born. Therefore his name is Rudra. Rudra. Rudra means anger. So when Lord Śiva becomes angry, the whole thing is finished."

Lecture Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 7.109-114

April 1967 ,16 San Francisco

Prabhupāda: … Just like our Gandhi: he wanted to prove, from Bhagavad-gītā, nonviolence. The Bhagavad-gītā is being preached in the battlefield, and it is completely violence. How he can prove? Therefore he is dragging the meaning out of his own con... It is very troublesome, and anyone who will read such interpretation, he is doomed. He is doomed because the Bhagavad-gītā is meant for awakening your Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

If that is not awakened, then it is useless waste of time. Just like Caitanya Mahāprabhu embraced the brāhmaṇa who was illiterate but he took the essence of Bhagavad-gītā, the relationship between the Lord and the devotee. Therefore, unless we take the real, I mean to say, essence of any literature, it is simply waste of time.

tāṅhāra nāhika doṣa, īśvara-ājñā pāñā

gauṇārtha karila mukhya artha ācchādiyā

[Cc. Ādi 7.110]

[Śaṅkarācārya is not at fault, for it is under the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead that he has covered the real purport of the Vedas.]

Now, at the beginning, He criticized Śaṅkarācārya, that "If somebody hears Śaṅkarācārya's commentation, then he's sure to be doomed." But again He supports Śaṅkarācārya. Why? Śaṅkarācārya is the incarnation of Lord Śiva, and he's a great devotee. Śaṅkara... Vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ: "There are many devotees of the Lord, but the foremost devotee is Lord Śiva."

And he has got a disciplic succession which is called Viṣṇu-Svāmī-sampradāya. So Śaṅkarācārya was covered devotee. He's covered devotee. His aim was to bring men to the standard of devotional service, but the time and circumstances in which he was preaching, he could not place his real object because they were unable to understand.

At last, at the end of his life, he composed so many poetries in praise of Vṛndāvana-līlā, and especially his very famous Catpar pandika[?], that is, he has stated,

bhaja govindaṁ bhaja govindaṁ

bhaja govindaṁ mūḍha-mate

prāpte sannihite kāla maraṇe

na hi na hi rakṣati ḍukṛñ-karaṇe

[Śaṅkarācārya]

[You fools and rascals, all your grammatical word jugglery of suffixes, prefixes and philosophical speculation will not save you at the time of death. Just worship Govinda ! Worship Govinda ! Worship Govinda !]

"My dear foolish brothers, you kindly worship Kṛṣṇa, Govinda..." Thrice he has said, bhaja govindaṁ bhaja govindaṁ bhaja govindaṁ mūḍha-mate. Mūḍha-mate means "You foolish nonsense, you kindly worship Govinda." Why ? Now, prāpte sannihite kāla maraṇe: "When death will be nearer, your this grammatical interpretation, ḍukṛñ karaṇe, this pratha that pratha, arguing, jugglery of words, will not save you. Will not save you. You please worship Govinda." That is his instruction. And there are many others.

Lecture on Bhagavad-gītā 7.2

Oct. 1975 ,28 Nairobi

Prabhupāda: Yes, everyone is Vaiṣṇava. He is the greatest Vaiṣṇava. Vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ. Unless he is Vaiṣṇava, how he gets this power ? The power comes from the original person. Mattaḥ smṛtir jñānam apohanaṁ ca [Bg. 15.15]. So unless one is Vaiṣṇava, he has no power. All right.

Room Conversation after Press Conference

July 1975 ,9 Chicago

Prabhupāda: No. Vaiṣṇavānām yathā śambhuḥ [SB 12.13.16] = "Amongst the Vaiṣṇavas, Śaṁbhu, Lord Śiva, is the greatest Vaiṣṇava." So we worship Lord Śiva as Vaiṣṇava. We give respect to Vaiṣṇavas. So why not Lord Śiva? Lord Śiva is a big Vaiṣṇava. But generally, the devotees of Lord Śiva, they take Lord Śiva is independent god. That is offensive. If you know that Lord Śiva is also a devotee, you can give more respect to Lord Śiva. Kṛṣṇa will be pleased.

Conversation with Professor Hopkins

July 1975 ,13 Philadelphia

Prabhupāda: Yes. No, there are devotees. Just like we, we offer all respect to Lord Śiva. We consider Śiva as the best of the Vaiṣṇavas. Vaiṣṇavānām yathā śambhu. And we have got sampradāya from Śiva. He is considered one of the authority of Vaiṣṇavism.

Thus ends RSS #11